

Fighting for Others

FOREWORD BY

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What Is the Jacoby Club?

THAT question is much more easily asked than answered, at least in the terms of a report, for it concerns one of the great tragedies of modern civilization.

It concerns the redemption of people involved in this tragedy; it touches the basic elements of human weakness; and it aims to reclaim by faith in, and sympathy for, those who have been lured, stupefied, bewildered, and broken in spirit by the temptations of the saloon, and by the mental, physical, and moral agonies which those conditions involve.

So it is a veritable "human document" which this Club must offer as an annual report, because in no other way could the true character of its work and benefactions be revealed. No other would present to the mind, nor so faithfully visualize, the realities with which the Club is obliged to deal.

The Club is philanthropic yet its philanthropy cannot be wholly measured in statistical terms. Nor can

its accomplishments be any more satisfactory recorded, because where so much of its work is based on human sympathy the factors are not always susceptible of analysis.

It is the possibilities of the Club that should be defined, and this would be more easily accomplished if the power and influence of the personal equation were known, for primarily this is a Club of direct personal influences—influences in which broad sympathy and fine understanding are the main springs.

The Aim is Reclamation.

Perhaps the one word that best defines the aims and objects of the Jacoby Club is—*reclamation*. This word is much used these days in economic science, and especially in agriculture, in which it means to reclaim and make productive the waste and desert places of the earth. In the industries it means the utilization of what were formerly considered the waste products.

Were it not for the stupidity, ig-

norance, and indifference of mankind the waste and desert places of the earth might have been reclaimed and made to bloom centuries ago, and the slag and scrap of our industries made to pay dividends.

It is no mere simile to say that in human economy the Jacoby Club aims to achieve a somewhat similar result in reclamation, only its results cannot be capitalized and exploited in advance. The field of its work and operations is the lives of men that have been made waste and desert by liquor, and its aim is to reclaim these men and make them productive and useful members of society—restore to them the power of useful manhood and the capacity to live self-supporting and self-respecting lives.

It is a great and valuable work. In France, Germany, and England today, science and the keenest intelligences are working to make useful and self-supporting the great army of men who have been maimed or made blind in the terrible war that is going on. These men are the real victims of the

been through the battle with rum. They know what it means in all of its misery, and in the ultimate sorrow and hardship to others besides the victims themselves—to their own kindred especially. And finally they know a great deal about the causes of this world-misery and they have sensed the remedy.

Cause and Remedy.

The causes are manifold yet correlated. Some will say it is due to economic indifference natural enough in a society born and bred to a theory of acquisition that disregards consequences so long as the statute laws are not transcended. Others will say that emotionalism which seeks to find some outlet has something to do with it; also domestic misunderstandings due to general ignorance and lack of education; and yet others will say it is due to a general misconception of the mission of spirituality and human sympathy. Finally there is that thing which interplays through all the conditions of life—the desire for

freedom, for democracy, which the saloon and liquor seemingly but falsely attempts to supply at a terrible cost to the victim and the world.

But it is not the aim of the Jacoby Club to reform social conditions in the world; its appointed task is to reclaim the victims of the saloon. It aims to do this thing largely by sympathy and by helping the victims to help themselves. In fact that is the motto of the Club—"A Club for men to help themselves by helping others." If you will read that motto over carefully you will see that it has a double meaning—it involves a transaction in which both parties are beneficiaries; both are helped.

It has been found that corrective institutions and those run for financial profit accomplish but little for these unfortunates, for in the best institutions the touch of friendship and the sympathy that goes with friendship are missing, and these are the only chords that can be touched that will respond in the man who has been weakened in body and mind and who is in the throes of despair.

great struggle for they have been robbed of the first, necessary means of human existence—bodily power. The effort is to reclaim these men and make them self-supporting, and self-respecting.

This is an age of Reclamation! The world is awake to possibilities that the ignorance of the past could not see nor understand.

Can Victims be Reclaimed?

And so you people of intelligence and broad sympathies, what say you of the waste products of our Saloons? Can the victims be reclaimed? The members of the Jacoby Club believe these victims can be reclaimed and made to pay dividends in self-respect, in self-support, and in usefulness to themselves, their families and the world at large. And they believe they have discovered the secret of that reclamation.

Out of the saloons for centuries there has been flowing a great human wastage that has found its way into desolate homes, insane asylums,

jails, prisons, hospitals, and the Potter's Field. The Jacoby Club believes that the tide of this great flood of human wastage can be stemmed; that these maimed and wounded victims of the great alcoholic struggle may in large measure be reclaimed; and that out of even the bitter experiences they have been subjected to may come a new force for good in our civilization that will itself more than compensate for the effort which is required.

The Club believes this human wastage has in it great possibilities; that out of this stupefied army will come rich harvests—new dividends; that out of this human "slag" will come men who can be made not only self-supporting and self-respecting, but with larger sympathies to a world which is more in need of broad human sympathy than any other one thing. For it is the man who has been through the battle that knows most about the horrors of the war.

And that's just the point! The active membership of the Jacoby Club consists largely of men who have

Through sympathy self-respect is awakened and the miracle has begun.

Each member of the Jacoby Club takes it on himself to look after at least one victim—visit him, chat with him, get his confidence, inspire him with hope, help him to employment, and then keep in touch with him until he too feels in himself the power to help some other unfortunate. Then the miracle is completed. A new vision has come into the life of this man and of that man; a new desire has been born in them—the noblest of all desires—the desire to help the unfortunate.

It is very human, very real work, this of the Jacoby Club, and it is the essence of Christianity. It is a flank attack on the greatest enemy of Society.

The Key to the Situation.

Over 1,400 men have been helped in this way since the Club was organized by Ernest Jacoby in 1909—a man of the broadest sympathies but with a practical mind. He likes to

see practicable, demonstrable results. Mr. Jacoby had thought much on the whole problem and in talking the matter over with men who had either "been through the mill" or were "going through" he discovered that the key to the situation was intelligent sympathy. So he determined to work along that line and he found among those who were helped many who were anxious to assist in the work, and so it has grown quietly and unostentatiously, but effectively.

The Story of Bill Bursell.

The Jacoby Club Anthology contains some epic examples of heroism; of fortitude and courage; of struggle and agony; and of defeats turned into victory. You probably never heard of Bill Bursell. He never quite got into the courts so you probably did not. Yet Bill's life was a tragedy to himself and his family, and others, for 16 years. His case is taken from the Anthology at random, yet it is in a way typical of thousands that make up the saloon wastage of the nation.

Bill Bursell was a fine, healthy, intelligent, hard-working American boy who liked a good time and was full of buoyancy and good nature in his work and with his working companions. That is the type the saloon loves and flatters, because that type is popular with the generality of men—and women.

Without going into the details of his business it is only necessary to state that in his line his ability was such that he became the Eastern representative for several large concerns, and he soon became known as one of the best men in his line and one of the most genial. If Bill's business friends ever felt sad over anything he took them to the saloon to cheer them up, and so he quickly became recognized as a "Prince of Good Fellows"—in the saloon. Flattery and liquor gave Bill a new opinion of himself. He got more and more to like the saloon and the regular habitues of the saloon, for they were always free of speech, reckless of thought, and untrammelled by conventionalities.

Bill became more and more of a good fellow in the saloon and less and less of an ambitious business man. In fact he began to get a little out of temper with a business that demanded so much of his attention, and what was very much worse, he lost his temper at home. You see although he was very much a man of the world he was entirely unsophisticated in regard to liquor. He didn't have the slightest knowledge of the fact that the first symptoms of alcoholism often begin at home—strangling domestic affection.

There the tragedy of Bill Bursell's downward career began. He could not see the cords of the saloon tightening around him; he only chafed under the obligations that home and business imposed. He fought blindly as all men fight when they are soaked in liquor, and he began to lose ground in his business through lack of attention. But he found solace in the saloon and stuck to it until he lost self-respect, home, business and friends—even in the saloon, for the saloon and the saloon

habitués have no use for the man who is "broke."

Then he began to think—a little—about his own condition. He had plenty of time for that now, and no business or home ties to bother him in his thoughts. But of course these are the very things that bother the victim incessantly at this time and drive him to desperation. But Bill was weak in body and mind. His friends had completely deserted him. He was a pest and when a man becomes a "pest" to his friends and fellow-men he is on the last rung of the ladder. He had a sense of shame, however, which some men never lose, but this only made matters worse for Bill in his moments of retrospection. His clothes were so shabby that he drifted to remote and out of the way places. He slept in old buildings or wherever he could, for he had no regular lodging. He was reduced to begging and liable to arrest at any moment on a charge of vagrancy.

Heard of Jacoby Club.

In some way Bill heard of the Jacoby Club, and one day he mustered up enough courage to call on the secretary. The secretary of the Jacoby Club is used to tough looking sights but Bill Bursell was about the worst looking object he had ever seen—unkempt, unnerved, down and out. Bill looked the shame he felt. The secretary talked with him, saw there were still a few traces of manhood and refinement in him and told him to cheer up—that no man was lost who had even a sense of shame in him.

The secretary quickly verified the man's story as to his former position in business and in life, and then he and Mr. Jacoby took hold of the human wreck and began the work of repair to keep it afloat, for awhile at least. Some decent clothes were obtained for him, a room was secured where he could also get some healthy food, and he was encouraged to begin the fight against liquor and the fight to regain a place in the world. A special friend—one of the members

who had been through the mill—was assigned to him, and gave him sympathy and encouragement. This friend got Bill's confidence because he could tell of his own fight. That put a little hope and courage into Bill and the friend stuck to him until he got back some of his physical strength. That first period is one of agony when nothing but sympathy will count.

In the course of a few weeks a job was secured for Bill. He was to begin life all over again, but he had at least one advantage—he had a friend. The work was new to him, and he was a little clumsy for a few days, but he was determined not to disappoint his friend so he stuck to it and his strength came back, little by little, and his experience with the world began to assert itself in his job, and Bill is winning laurels by his steady and faithful services. His friends began to return to him; news of his reclamation spread, and he found that many of those he had come to regard as enemies were glad to renew acquaintance and congratulate him on his victory. And his Jacoby Club

friend stuck to him and Bill burned with a new desire. He turned with a desire to help some other mortal who had sunk, whose life had been made desolate. And he did just that thing, and he became one of the most active members of the Club. The miracle that intelligent sympathy wrought in him, he has seen wrought in others and he himself has wrought the miracle in others, but he has gained a new strength in helping others to help themselves.

Miracle Wrought in Tom Kilton.

There's a lot more that might be said about Bill Bursell and his family affairs, but that can easily be imagined. His "friend" knows all about it. (By the way, Bill Bursell is not his real name). Curiously enough most of the men who come to the Jacoby Club have been successes in business or as craftsmen at some time in their lives, and the knowledge of this former success becomes a stimulant to renewed effort when they

once get a new "foothold." But they stick to the Jacoby Club.

There is a "story"—a thrilling, human story—in nearly every one of these men. Think of a man like Tom Kilton who had been drinking for twenty years and had tried all kinds of "cures" in an effort to break away from liquor that had destroyed his home happiness and put his position—able as he was—in constant jeopardy. It was a friend of Tom's—a man who knew something of the work of the Jacoby Club—who called on the secretary and asked if something couldn't be done to save Tom Kilton. It wasn't an easy job, for Tom was nervous and high-strung and quick to resent anything that would savor of patronizing. Yet these are the very men who appreciate sympathy and the tactful secretary after a visit to Tom at the latter's home and a heart-to-heart talk got a response that was encouraging.

He was invited to attend the Club and a member who had "been through the mill" and through some exceptionally bitter experiences was sent to

bring Tom to the Club, and to see that he was made welcome. He came and this particular member became Tom's Particular "friend" and told Tom of his own struggle—told him in a casual friendly way, as man to man, and with just that touch of humor and lightness at times that breeds courage and hope in men.

Well, there isn't much use in going into the details of Tom's fight—he won it, and is now one of the most enthusiastic members of the Club. It might be added that he holds a responsible position with a large commercial house in Boston. And it might also be added that he has helped several men to help themselves and has placed several in good positions. And finally it is only fair to state, that Tom Kilton's ruling motive in life is to help others to help themselves. There is no sacrifice too great for him when he becomes any man's "friend" in the fight to regain manhood.

These are just two examples of the many that are being worked out to a successful conclusion by the Jacoby

Club all the time. They are simply cross sections of lives that give some idea of the human material which the Club is dealing in, and of course in placing the emphasis on the victim, one must not overlook the other sufferers—the family and friends of the victim—who are also benefited by the work.

It Needs Your Help.

And it will make clear why it is not possible to present a statistical report on such a subject. Such a report would not do the work justice. This work is broadly human and finely spiritual—it is an influence. And yet it is wholly in line with the scientific spirit of the age for it is the best kind of reclamation.

It is a work that needs your help and the help of all those who are interested in their fellow-men. The men themselves who have been reclaimed give freely of their time and resources; they are the "friends" whose sympathies have been vitalized by their own experiences. It is up to

us to help these men "help others to help themselves."

There are no fees or dues required to become a member. Any man who agrees to try to live an honorable life and who acknowledges in actual practice the brotherhood of man is eligible for membership. Brotherhood must be more than a vague theory or an ethical abstraction—it must be practiced. The membership is not restricted, however, to men of any one class. Besides those who have come to the Club to be helped there are others who have come to help, whose quiet influence and work are also invaluable and stimulating.